

## Death of U.S. Citizen

When an American dies abroad and the embassy is informed, a consular officer notifies the family of the deceased and informs them about options and costs for disposition of remains. Costs for preparing and returning a body to the U.S. may be high and must be paid by the family. Often, local laws and procedures make returning a body to the U.S. for burial a lengthy process. A consul prepares a Report of Death of an American Abroad based on the local death certificate; this is forwarded to the next of kin for use in estate and insurance matters.

Please contact the U.S. Embassy Consular Section immediately to report the death or serious injury of a U.S. citizen. The Department of State web site describes the type of assistance that the Consular Section can offer in the case of the [Death or Injury of an American Citizen Abroad](#).

The U.S. Embassy Consular Section provides guidance to family members of the deceased on how to make arrangements for local burial or to return the remains to the U.S. The Consular Section also produces a Consular Report of Death Abroad for the family to use as proof of death in legal proceedings in the U.S. Please note that the Consular Section cannot produce the Consular Report of Death Abroad until a local death certificate is issued.

The Embassy regrets that it does not have funds available to help with the return of remains or other costs associated with funeral arrangements. The Consular Section will assist with documentation for remains shipped to the U.S. and will oversee the required preparations, but all costs are the responsibility of the family. While shipment of remains via commercial airlines is possible, it is very expensive and takes time. Cremation and local burial are available in Sierra Leone.